

1231311

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to three children with social, emotional and complex mental health difficulties.

The home is led by a manager who registered with Ofsted in February 2021.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September and 25 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 21 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Serious failures in administering medication impact on children's welfare. Staff failed to collect a prescription for a child's medication for 48 hours. This meant that a child, already vulnerable to infection, did not receive antibiotics in a timely way. The child subsequently needed to be admitted to hospital to receive treatment for an infection. This could have been avoided. A shortfall in staff practice seriously compromised a child's health and well-being and this contributes to the inadequate judgement.

Staff do not accurately record the dosage of medication as prescribed, which leaves children at risk. This error was only identified at inspection, which shows that management oversight of medication has been poor. The registered person took immediate action by introducing a new recording system which includes a medical consultant periodically overseeing medication.

Children are registered with local health services and they can also access therapeutic support from specialist clinicians. The registered manager is making great efforts to register a new child with a dentist, despite a shortage of places at local dental surgeries. However, children who need to wear glasses are not always well supported to do so.

The registered manager considers the needs of new children who move into the home in relation to the needs of those already living there. Children visit the home and meet staff before they move in. In most cases, children are helped to prepare for their move to their new home to reduce some of their anxieties. Local factors relating to the nearby main road and transport links are not always taken into account when matching new children to the home.

Despite a child moving into the home in a planned way, insufficient thought has been given to education. The registered manager has not followed this up promptly. This means that a child does not yet have an identified school place. Two children experienced unplanned moves on from the home. Staff continued to provide support for one child in difficult circumstances until an appropriate placement could be identified for her.

Children keep in touch with people who are important to them. This helps them to understand their journey in life and develop their identity. Children's views about spending time with their families are well considered by staff. This helps the children to feel that their views are important and acted on.

Children have some positive experiences. For example, they enjoy baking with staff, taking part in hair and beauty activities, and going on trips to the cinema and to an adventure park.

One child has made good progress with different aspects of their development from their starting point. For example, they attend school every day and have won the 'Pupil of the Week' award several times. They have developed positive relationships with the adults caring for them. In addition, with staff support, the child is developing their independence skills and learning how to look after themselves.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Risks relating to children who self-harm are not managed effectively by staff. For example, on more than one occasion, one child has been able to give another child razor blades that they have then used to cut themselves with. Neither the registered manager nor the staff have explored how this happened and what action could be taken to reduce the risk of this happening again. This lack of professional curiosity and effective follow-up action has left children at risk of harm.

At the time of this inspection, a safeguarding concern was being investigated by a child's placing authority. The registered manager and responsible individual were unaware of what was happening with the investigation and its current status. Record-keeping in relation to this matter is poor and managers have taken insufficient action to reduce the risk to children while the investigation is ongoing and the outcome is unknown.

It is rare that children go missing from the home. Staff look for children who are not where they should be. However, staff do not always follow the guidance set out in risk assessments. For example, they do not always contact individuals identified in the child's risk assessment to find out if they have had contact with the child.

Managers, including senior managers, have not learned from an incident when a child went missing from home during the night without staff knowing. This incident happened prior to the last inspection. Because managers did not take effective action to reduce the risk of this happening again, a further incident has occurred. Failure to take prompt action to reduce risk compromises children's safety.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort when needed to keep children safe. Children and staff involved in restraint incidents are supported to reflect on the incident and develop strategies to avoid the situation reoccurring. However, staff do not always clearly record a description of the restraint technique used and managers reviewing the record do not pick up on this and address it.

A concern regarding the security of the premises that was raised at the last inspection had not been addressed by managers. This compromised children's safety and that of staff because strangers or unauthorised people could access the children's home through an unsecured door. Managers did take action during this inspection to secure the premises appropriately.

Positive rewards and consequences are used to help children to learn to manage their behaviour. Mostly these are used well. However, staff do not always record when a consequence involves restricting a child's access to their mobile phone.

Children will talk to staff when they are worried about something. When an allegation was raised about staff that implicated the registered manager, procedures were followed and the matter was investigated. The manager informed the child of the outcome of the investigation. Given that the manager was involved in the concern, this is not good practice and may deter a child raising questions or further concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Some of the systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided to children are weak. This is because when significant incidents happen, including safeguarding concerns, managers do not take swift and effective action to protect children from harm. This inaction has, on occasion, compromised children's safety, health and well-being.

On two occasions, managers have not notified Ofsted about safeguarding concerns, in line with regulation. This means that the regulator does not have all relevant information to understand what is happening at the home.

Children are cared for by a consistent staff team. Five staff are qualified. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to delays in some staff achieving their level 3 qualification. Although staff are continuing to work towards this, managers do not have a clear plan which is kept under review to ensure that staff complete this as soon as possible.

All staff have completed training in core subjects, including mental health first aid. This provides staff with some understanding of the complex needs of the children they care for.

Permanent staff receive regular supervision from the registered manager. However, this is not used to address practice issues to help staff understand what they need to do to develop, and to help to prevent incidents from reoccurring. In addition, agency staff do not receive regular supervision, despite working in the home frequently.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve? Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c))</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other.</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(d))</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>

<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvement in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(f)(h))</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that when planning for new children to come to live at the home, the education needs of children are given due attention so that an appropriate placement is identified and plans are made for the child to return to school as soon as possible.</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that new systems in place to monitor the handling, recording and administration of medicines are fully implemented and monitored regularly.</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that agency staff who work at the home regularly receive supervision.</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>

<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children’s home from abuse or neglect, and</p> <p>sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular,</p> <p>provide for liaison and co-operation with any local authority which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(d))</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(c)(i)(ii)(e))</p>	<p>4 December 2022</p>

Recommendation

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, ensure that records clearly show that the registered person, or someone with suitable authority, has seen each staff member’s original Disclosure and Barring Service certificate. In addition, that any checks on the update service are linked to that certificate and any discussion about the information is clearly recorded as part of employment checks. (Guide to the

Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1231311

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Limited

Registered provider address: 16 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands
WV1 4BL

Responsible individual: Rachel Oliver

Registered manager: Godfred Summerville

Inspectors

Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector
Jackie Line, Social Care Inspector

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